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HOUSE PARLIAMENTARIAN

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB1070 Department of Social and Economic Mobility- Workforce Opportunities Grant Program and Fund

Hearing: February 26, 2026, 1:00pm

Chair Melissa Wells, Vice Chair Kenneth Kerr

Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

HB1070 establishes the Workforce Opportunity Grant Program that mandates an annual appropriation (\$500,000.00) in the State Budget to facilitate job fairs across Maryland. This is a targeted investment designed to directly connect Maryland job seekers with Maryland businesses that will generate economic opportunity and mobility.

Workforce access remains the single most important factor for business growth. Here in Maryland, employers consistently report that difficulty finding workers results in inability to expand, innovate, and remain competitive. Economic uncertainty, including federal workforce reductions and broader economic pressures has left Marylanders actively seeking employment. While Maryland saw employment growth between 1.5% and 3% in 2024, growth in 2025 has slowed to 1% per month.

HB1070 brings employers and jobseekers in one place, removing barriers to hiring and expediting employment. This bill target students of higher education, including community colleges and trade programs, job seekers who are returning citizens, and those who live in jurisdictions with high unemployment rates. Priority consideration will be granted to applicants who have trusted community partnerships and experience working with job seekers.

This bill was inspired by the success of The Maryland Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Chair Will Smith, Chair Jheanelle Wilkins, and the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce job fair last fall. This event attracted hundreds of job seekers, brought more than 25 employers and service providers to Silver Spring, and generated same day hiring. By investing a modest amount of revenue to replicate that event in districts across the state, Maryland can generate direct and immediate economic opportunities for thousands of constituents.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report for HB1070.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie M. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'S'.

Delegate Stephanie Smith